

Introduction

The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the Animas-La Plata Project was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency and distributed to the public on January 14, 2000. The public comment period opened on January 14, 2000 and was originally set to close on March 17, 2000; however, the comment period was extended by 30 days, as noticed in the *Federal Register* on March 9, 2000. The public comment period closed on April 17, 2000.

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) conducted three public hearings on the ALP Project DSEIS in Durango, Colorado; Farmington, New Mexico; and Denver, Colorado on February 15, 16, and 17, 2000, respectively. Notice of the public hearings was announced in the local media and published in the *Federal Register* on January 14, 2000. A total of 77 people presented oral testimony. Speakers represented the Colorado Ute Tribes, Navajo Nation, federal and state agencies, various organizations including county and local offices, water districts, environmental groups, and individuals.

Written comments were accepted by Reclamation at each hearing and were also received as letters and via email throughout the entire public comment period. A total of 397 oral and written comments/letters/e-mails were received. These oral and written comments/letters/e-mails are collectively referred to as "letters". Responses have been prepared for each of these letters, and, where appropriate, changes have been made in the text of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS). Changes made are marked in the FSEIS by a bar in the margin of the text. Responses were developed for comments and questions that were within the scope of the proposed action.

Volume 3 is divided into two documents bound separately - Volume 3A contains 15 general comments and responses and 216 letters and responses thereto. Volume 3B contains 181 letters with the same or very similar wording.

The 15 general responses contained in Volume 3A were developed by Reclamation to respond to issues that were repeatedly mentioned in the comment letters and during the public hearings. Responses to such issues raised in those comment letters are referred back to the section on General Comments and Responses. Also contained in Volume 3A are the 216 individual letters and Reclamation's responses to the specific issues raised in the letters. Letters are organized by their source, i.e., public hearings, federal and state agencies, organizations, tribal entities, water districts, and individuals. In many instances, the reader is also referred to a section or chapter in the FSEIS for further information.

A number of letters containing the same or very similar wording were received during the comment review period. Responses are made to issues raised the first time that a "form" letter appears and is included in Volume 3A. Subsequent copies of this "form" letter are reproduced in Volume 3B.